

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

- 1-22. (Canceled)
23. (New) A process for the storage of a protein in an aqueous solution, comprising adding an amount of cysteine effective to delay the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein by preventing chemical modification of SH groups on the protein during storage, wherein the effective concentration does not decrease by more than about 7%.
24. (New) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the effective concentration does not decrease by more than about 3%.
25. (New) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the protein is a heterologous protein prepared in a microorganism.
26. (New) The process as claimed in claim 25, wherein the microorganism is a bacterium.
27. (New) The process as claimed in 26, wherein the bacterium is *Escherichia coli*.

28. (New) The process as claimed in claim 25, wherein the microorganism is a yeast.
29. (New) The process as claimed in claim 28, wherein the yeast is *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*.
30. (New) The process as claimed in claim 28, wherein the yeast is *Pichia pastoris*.
31. (New) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the protein is a heterologous protein and is prepared in an insect cell.
32. (New) The process as claimed in claim 25 or claim 31, wherein the protein is prepared from an expression vector construct.
33. (New) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the protein is present in dissolved form.
34. (New) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the protein is present in suspension.
35. (New) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the storage of the protein takes place at about 0°C to about 50°C.

36. (New) The process as claimed in claim 35, wherein the storage of the protein takes place at about 5°C to about 30°C.
37. (New) The process as claimed in claim 35, wherein the storage of the protein takes place at about 5°C.
38. (New) The process as claimed in claim 23, wherein the protein is insulin, an insulin derivative, or a precursor thereof.
39. (New) A process for the preparation and storage of a heterologous protein, comprising the expression of the heterologous protein or a precursor thereof in a transformed microorganism, optional disruption of the microorganism and/or isolation of the heterologous protein or its precursor from the culture medium, and the subsequent storage of the heterologous protein according to the process of claim 23.
40. (New) The process of claim 39, further comprising the renaturation of the heterologous protein or its precursor and the purification and isolation of the heterologous protein, including optional removal of a leader sequence or other sequences that may be present in the precursor of the heterologous protein.
41. (New) The process as claimed in claim 39, wherein the heterologous protein is animal insulin.

42. (New) The process as claimed in claim 41, wherein the animal insulin is human insulin.
43. (New) A process for the storage of a protein in an aqueous solution, comprising adding an amount of cysteine effective to delay the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein by preventing chemical modification of SH groups on the protein during a period of greater than 24 hours.
44. (New) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein is delayed for a period of 48 hours or more.
45. (New) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein is delayed for a period of 1 week or more.
46. (New) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein is delayed for a period of 2 weeks or more.
47. (New) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein is delayed for a period of 4 weeks or more.
48. (New) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein is delayed for a period of 8 weeks or more.

49. (New) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the temporal decrease in the effective concentration of the protein is delayed for a period of from greater than 24 hours to 2 months.
50. (New) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the protein is a heterologous protein prepared in a microorganism.
51. (New) The process as claimed in claim 50, wherein the microorganism is a bacterium.
52. (New) The process as claimed in claim 51, wherein the bacterium is *Escherichia coli*.
53. (New) The process as claimed in claim 50, wherein the microorganism is a yeast.
54. (New) The process as claimed in claim 53, wherein the yeast is *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*.
55. (New) The process as claimed in claim 53, wherein the yeast is *Pichia pastoris*.
56. (New) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the protein is a heterologous protein and is prepared in an insect cell.

57. (New) The process as claimed in claim 50 or claim 56, wherein the protein is prepared from an expression vector construct.
58. (New) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the protein is present in dissolved form.
59. (New) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the protein is present in suspension.
60. (New) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the storage of the protein takes place at about 0°C to about 50°C.
61. (New) The process as claimed in claim 60, wherein the storage of the protein takes place at about 5°C to about 30°C.
62. (New) The process as claimed in claim 60, wherein the storage of the protein takes place at about 5°C.
63. (New) The process as claimed in claim 43, wherein the protein stored is insulin, an insulin derivative, or a precursor thereof.
64. (New) A process for the preparation and storage of a heterologous protein, comprising the expression of the heterologous protein or its precursor in a transformed microorganism, optional disruption of the microorganism and/or

isolation of the heterologous protein or its precursor from the culture medium, and the subsequent storage of the heterologous protein according to the process of claim 43.

65. (New) The process of claim 64, further comprising the renaturation of the heterologous protein or its precursor and the purification and isolation of the heterologous protein, including optional removal of a leader sequence or other sequences that may be present in the precursor of the heterologous protein.
66. (New) The process as claimed in claim 64, wherein the heterologous protein is animal insulin.
67. (New) The process as claimed in claim 64, wherein the animal insulin is human insulin.